

## The Countersign was "Mary."

BY MARGARET EYTINGE.

'Twas near the break of day, but still  
 The moon was shining brightly;  
 The west wind as it passed the flowers  
 Set each one swaying lightly;  
 The sentry slow paced to and fro,  
 A faithful night-watch keeping,  
 While in the tents behind him stretched,  
 His comrades—all were sleeping.  
 Slow to and fro the sentry paced,  
 His musket on his shoulder,  
 But not a thought of death or war  
 Was with the brave young soldier.  
 Ah, no! his heart was far away  
 Where, on a Western prairie,  
 A rose-twined cottage stood. That night  
 The countersign was "Mary."  
 And there his own true love he saw,  
 Her blue eyes kindly beaming;  
 Above them, on her sun-kissed brow,  
 Her curls like sunshine gleaming;  
 And heard her singing, as she churned  
 The butter in the dairy,  
 The song he loved the best. That night  
 The countersign was "Mary."

"They told me that I could not pass  
 The lines to seek my lover  
 Before day fairly came; but I  
 Pressed on ere night was over;  
 And as I told my name, I found  
 The way free as the prairie."  
 "Because, thank God! to-night," he said  
 "The countersign is 'Mary.'"

"Oh, for one kiss from her!" he sighed,  
 When up the lone road glancing  
 He spied a form, a little form,  
 With faltering steps advancing;  
 And as it neared him silently  
 He gazed at in wonder;  
 Then dropped his musket to his hand,  
 And challenged: "Who goes yonder?"  
 Still on it came. "Not one step more,  
 Be you man, child or fairy,  
 Unless you give the countersign,  
 Halt! Who goes there?" "'Tis Mary,"  
 A sweet voice cried, and in his arms  
 The girl he'd left behind him  
 Half fainting fell. O'er many miles  
 She'd bravely toiled to find him.  
 "I heard that you were wounded, dear,"  
 She sobbed "My heart was breaking,  
 I could not stay a moment; but,  
 All other ties forsaking,  
 I travelled, by my grief made strong,  
 Kind Heaven watching o'er me,  
 Until—unhurt and well—" "Yes, love,"  
 "At last you stood before me."

## BAD COMPANY.

The history of Tobias, one of the most beautiful narratives of the Old Testament, teaches us many lessons. There we find a charming picture of home-life. The father of a family is at once the example and teacher of virtue to his young son; the son a model of filial devotion to his aged parents, succoring them in their need, submissive to their will, delighted to give them pleasure. The life of the family is full

of peace. Even in affliction they recognize the finger of God, and His blessing rests upon them. He is the sunshine of their home. To serve Him—to keep themselves free from sin—is their chief care. When, therefore, it became necessary that the younger Tobias should make a long journey, the first thought of his father was to find him a suitable companion. He would not trust his child to the